



IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

USA Division Patent Application of:

USA PCT National Stage Patent Application

PCT/EP98/02901 filed May 16, 1998

Günther Bender

Serial No.: 10/725,775

Filed: December 1, 2003

ELECTRICAL PLUG-IN CONNECTION

Examiner: Dexter Tugbang

Group art unit: 3729

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CERTIFICATE OF MAILING  
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Commissioner for Patents  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

S I R :

SUBMISSION OF REPORT ON INTERVIEW IN PARENT APPLICATION SERIAL  
NO.: 09/445,776 FILED MARCH 27, 2000.

A telephone interview was conducted on September 23, 2003 with Examiner Tugbang to determine why a final rejection was issued as the first Office Action in the request for continued examination (RCE) process.

The Examiner explained in the telephone interview that, instead of applying the US rules for unity of invention, the Examiner applied the PCT rules for unity of invention because this application evolved from a PCT application. In the US PTO, this is referred to as a rule 371 application with restriction procedure explained in section 1850 in the PTO's Manual of Patent Examining Procedure. In that procedure, one looks to the independent claims to find if a significant feature of one

independent claim is lacking in another of the independent claims, such a situation requiring a restriction.

By way of example, claim 14 was said to be drawn to a method of using a guide (top of page 3 of the Office Action). The applicant pointed out that claim 4 also mentioned a guide so that there should be no restriction. The Examiner said that claim 4 was more definite in stating that the guide was in a region of a contact partner of the plug housing while claim 14 stated only that the guide was in the plug housing. If applicant were to introduce this further limitation into claim 14, the Examiner would consider claim 14 and its dependent claim 15 to be for the same invention as claim 4, although he made no commitment to do so. Also, with respect to claim 13 wherein the Examiner alleges that this claim is drawn to laser welding (bottom of page 2 of the Office Action), the Examiner stated that if the applicant were to rewrite the last clause of claim 13 to recite a method step of "providing a single opening in the housing for admitting a laser beam to provide for the laser welding of the contact partners", the Examiner would consider claim 13 to be for the same invention as claim 1, although he made no commitment to do so.

The Examiner stated further that he would act upon a future response to the present Final Office Action in accordance with the practice of acting upon an after-final response.

R E M A R K S

This is a report on an interview which took place in the parent application. It is being reported in this application, which claims right of priority in the parent application, because the issues discussed in the interview are believed to affect patentability of the claims in the present application.

It is urged that the claims presented in this application meet the requirements of unity of invention as discussed in the interview. Accordingly, the present claims are believed to be directed to the same invention as set forth by claim 1 of the parent application.

An examination on the merits is requested.

Respectfully submitted  
Günther Bender

by: \_\_\_\_\_  
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CERTIFICATE OF MAILING UNDER 37 CFR SECTION 1.8(a)

I hereby certify that the accompanying Submission of Report on Interview in Parent Application Serial No.: 09/445,776 filed March 27, 2000 is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner for Patents, PO Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on December 26, 2003.

Dated: December 26, 2003

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